



### Bridon – increasing capacity with no additional investment

#### The Background



Bridon is a leading specialist in the manufacture of wire and rope solutions for the most demanding applications.

Bridon products provide solutions to the most arduous and technically demanding challenges, extensively used in construction, mining, oil & gas extraction, telecommunications, automotive components and other specialised areas of engineering – markets where there can be no compromise over product performance, safety or integrity.

In 2005, the company did not have any spare capacity to meet the increased market demand, in particular in the petro-chemical sector, with the potential outcome of having to turn away new orders, with lead times ranging from 8 to 26 weeks.

In order to meet customer demand, productivity would need to be increased by 50%, moving from 2 ropes produced each week to 3. With each rope taking 2 to 2.5 days to produce, the factory was already at full capacity, scheduling was erratic and the highly skilled workforce under increasing pressure.



The issue of having to meet increasing customer demands with finite resources is one that can be universally understood in any organisation and sector.

#### Using highly effective project management methods to ensure programme delivery

A vital component of managing change effectively and achieving customer goals, is clear and effective project management. This capability, coupled with clear and accurate communication to all members of the organisation, is a cornerstone of LT Consulting’s way of working with our clients. Shown below are a few examples of this approach in operation:-

<p>(1) Clear Master Schedule:</p>	<p>(2) Use of Deming Cycle:</p>
<p>&gt; All key events/costs/resources + status</p>	<p>&gt; Driving Continuous Improvement</p>
<p>(3) Communication Centre:</p>	<p>(4) Risk Management – Impact Grid:</p>
<p>&gt; Open communication / Status at a glance</p>	<p>&gt; Visualisation &amp; management of the risk</p>

#### The Assignment

The aims and objectives of the project were to:

- ❖ increase productivity in the petro-chemical sector without impacting on other business sectors;
- ❖ maintain level of overheads while increasing production and capacity with the current facilities and workforce;
- ❖ maintain high standards of product quality and integrity;
- ❖ reduce lead time to over 30%.

#### SUMMARY

##### Focus

Change Programme

##### Challenge

To raise productivity to meet increased demand without impacting on the rest of the business and without additional overheads

##### Process

Continuous Improvement

##### Benefits

- Increased production to the customers target level
- Overall effectiveness (OEE) increased dramatically
- Return on investment 1500%
- Quality Standards maintained
- No job losses
- Principles of continuous improvement fully adopted

### LT's Approach

From LT's perspective, the key to achieving the objectives was to fully understand the current situation, by spending time on site with the team, observing and developing a partnership so the issues can be discussed in an open and honest environment. This step in the LT Consulting model is vital to the success of the overall programme, as it identifies exactly the problems facing the client. This is achieved using a number of techniques for example:



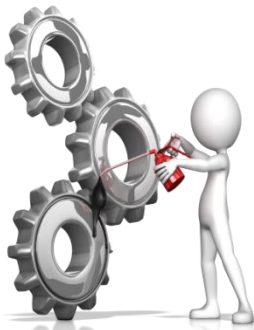
- ❖ Value Stream Mapping
- ❖ operational business process map
- ❖ in depth overall equipment efficiency figures (identified as 28-32% compared to the 68% it was believed to be)
- ❖ Client visits to gather best practice ideas

Once the current situation was understood, the key step was to identify where the areas of waste were. This was done via a series of Improvement Events with 8 to 12 people in each team focusing on:

- operational improvement;
- quality improvement;
- maintenance improvement

The key from the investigations was to take a pro-active approach to maintaining the machines, to ensure

that they could run at full capacity, together with addressing previous preventive maintenance schedules, which were not truly focused on critical areas



### The Results

Within three months, production had increased to the target of 3 ropes per week with no increase in overheads and a figure of 47% OEE. The return on the investment in the activity was 1500%, with all quality standards maintained and no job losses.

There was no impact on meeting customer demands in the other sectors and once the demands in the petro chemical sector levelled off, capacity was increased in these other areas



*Before*



*After photos of the facility at Bridon*

Bridon has fully adopted the principles of continuous improvement and is currently revisiting its core business areas to build on the previous achievements, including value stream mapping across multiple sites.

Sustainability is evident in daily activities - through standard work, visual tracking and senior management commitment.

If you are interested in this case study, other examples of our work or EQLearn™ please do contact us.

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